

Arbo Downsview Site Preparation  
Community Open House  
October 23, 2025  
4:00 – 7:00 PM  
Downsview Hub, 70 Canuck Avenue

## OPEN HOUSE OVERVIEW

On Thursday, October 23, 2025, Canada Lands hosted a community open house to share updates on site preparation activities in the Phase 1 lands of the Arbo neighbourhood at Downsview.

Approximately 50 people attended the Open House at Downsview Hub between 4 and 7 pm, including residents, business owners, and representatives from local community organizations. In addition to Canada Lands staff and their consultant team, Councillor Pasternak and his staff were also present to address project-related questions and provide further information.

The Open House included information boards that provided general information about the Arbo District Plan, project timeline and phasing, as well as information about upcoming work starting in November 2025 and running through 2027 to prepare the Phase 1 lands for development, including:

- removal of some trees, shrubs, and understorey outside of the protected woodlot
- removal of some of the old road and utilities
- construction of Sugar Maple Way (the new east-west street south of the woodlot)
- watermain and sewer construction
- rehabilitation of the existing pedestrian bridge
- park construction and woodlot restoration



Canada Lands also shared updates related to Build Canada Homes, the Federal Lands Initiative led by CMHC, and planning for seniors.

The Open House boards and other additional information about Arbo Downsview can be found online at [www.arbodownsview.ca](http://www.arbodownsview.ca)

*This summary was written by Third Party Public, an independent facilitation team retained by Canada Lands to support engagement for Arbo Downsview. It is not meant to be a verbatim transcript, rather provides a summary of feedback, questions, and advice shared at the Open House.*

# FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Overall, many participants expressed support for the proposed plan, particularly for the proposed ecological park and the restoration work planned for the woodlot. Some expressed support and interest in the mix of affordable and market housing, as well as broader community benefits and the new community centre. Many expressed concerns about construction impacts and traffic management, and some felt that the proposed new buildings may be too high.



## 1. Ecological Park, Woodlot, and Green Space

### Feedback from participants

- Many participants expressed strong support for the proposed ecological park (Eco Park) and the preservation and restoration of the woodlot. Many emphasized the importance of protecting trees as much as possible, and some advocated for new green spaces. Some participants wanted to know where trails might be proposed in the Eco Park and whether the woodlot would be permanently fenced off from the public.
- Several participants were concerned about mowing or maintenance practices along the edges of the woodlot, including questions about if and why any native trees had been cut during maintenance activities.
- Some participants asked that planned bike lanes avoid removing trees.



### Information shared by Canada Lands

- The Canada Lands team discussed that all tree removals will be done under permits from the City of Toronto and through the work of certified arborists. Interim maintenance work has generally been focused on protecting the “dripline” (boundary) of the formal woodlot areas, to protect the mature native trees inside
- The focus of removals will be eradication of invasive species as outlined in the approved Ecological Management Plan (EMP)

## 2. Traffic and Construction

### Feedback from participants

- Many participants were concerned about congestion, especially on Keele Street, and what 1,700 new homes would mean for already over-capacity roads. Some participants inquired whether the new street would immediately become congested with traffic and sought further clarification on traffic signals, bike lanes, and the City's broader traffic management plan.

- Several participants raised concerns about construction traffic and its impacts on the residents.
- There was a request that pedestrian and cyclist flow be maintained as much as possible during construction between the north end of Arbo and Downsview Park.



### Information shared by Canada Lands

- The Canada Lands team discussed that the construction of Sugar Maple Way will bring upgrades to the intersections at Sheppard Ave W and Keele St to better manage vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists, including new lane configurations, new traffic signal timing, and new signage

## 3. Housing

### Feedback from participants

- Some participants were pleased to hear there would be a mix of market and affordable housing and were glad that the project is moving forward.
- Several participants expressed interest in investment opportunities in new units or future building opportunities. Some participants wanted to learn more about the Block 3A proposal and what social benefit criteria Canada Lands uses in evaluating builders beyond providing affordable housing.
- Some participants expressed concern about building heights, stating that the proposed buildings did not blend with the existing character of the community and do not need to be so tall.



### Information shared by Canada Lands

- The Canada Lands team discussed that through previous community feedback, there was a desire to increase the heights of some buildings if that meant the footprint of development (developable area) was reduced. The District Plan approved by the City and being implemented now is a result of that feedback from the community

## 4. Community Benefits and Facilities

### Feedback from participants

- Several participants asked about what financial benefits the community would receive from the development.
- A few participants were interested in the scale of investment coming to the Eco Park and the woodlot.

- Some participants were eager for the community centre planned for the area but were skeptical that it would happen.

#### **Information shared by Canada Lands**

- The Canada Lands team discussed the many community benefits being funded through the Phase 1 neighbourhood development, including land and funding contributions for the Downsview Community Recreation Centre, rehabilitation of the pedestrian bridge, a public art contribution, and restoration of the woodlot.

### **5. Process Advice**

#### **Feedback from participants**

- Some participants noted that the Ecological Management Plan should include a consultation process and involvement from interested community members.
- A participant suggested clearly identifying on the map of Canada Lands' neighbourhoods where the Northcrest districts and other active planning processes are for clarity of information and context.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The site preparation work is anticipated to start in November and will run through 2027. Additional information about the work and timing are included on the open house boards available on the project webpage - [www.arbodownsview.ca](http://www.arbodownsview.ca). Canada Lands will continue to provide regular updates through the project webpage and by email. If you have further questions regarding the preparation work or would like to sign-up for updates, please visit [www.arbodownsview.ca](http://www.arbodownsview.ca) or e-mail [arbodownsview@clc-sic.ca](mailto:arbodownsview@clc-sic.ca).